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County Life

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Christmas Giving

Local Lions club makes donation to 4Cs Food Bank.
See page 2.

A Job Well Done

Members of the local community bid farewell to long-time County Life editor Jenn Watt.
See pages 10 & 11

Winter Knitting

Haliburton resident continues on her prolific path of making mitts for local youth.
See page 13.

Minden's Scott Martin in front of his home, surrounded by his Christmas lights' display while wearing his shirt with an image of Chewbacca, a popular Star Wars character adorned with festive lights. Martin's home, which is located on Bobcaygeon Road beside Archie Stouffer Elementary School, is a well-known location for festive decorations. /DARREN LUM Staff

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Lions club donates over 20 boxes of food to 4Cs Food Bank

MIKE BAKER
County Life Editor

The shelves at the Haliburton 4Cs Food Bank will be fully stocked through to February thanks to the Haliburton & District Lions Club.

The local service group delivered more than 20 boxes of food to the food bank on Monday, Nov. 30. The haul was the result of a successful second-annual reverse advent calendar event, held throughout November. For each day of the month, participants were encouraged to pack away a specific item into a box, steadily building up inventory until they had 30 different items inside.

Around 20 people from across the community participated, helping to donate items such as cereal, peanut butter, Kraft dinner, rice, sugar and a wide collection of tinned items to the food bank. Lions Club member Sharen Wilson Carr took the lead in organizing the event once again this year, and was particularly excited by the community involvement this time around.

"This is just our second year with this event, having started in 2019. Last year we just gathered food amongst Lions club members and donated it," Wilson Carr said. "This year, we thought it might be a good idea, with everything going on in the world right now with COVID-19, to open it up to the community so they could give, and be a part of something. We've all been so limited this year with what we can do."

The Lions club invited those who participated in the program to attend the Haliburton 4Cs Food Bank facility, located at 33 York St in town, to help hand over the collection.

The Haliburton and District Lions Club's Reverse Advent Calendar yielded a huge return of more than 20 boxes for the 4Cs Food Bank in Haliburton. On hand for the donation on Monday, Nov. 30 was Gerald Hadley, left, Kathryn Kidd, the president of the Haliburton and District Club; Judy MacDuff, the 4Cs treasurer; Sharen Wilson Carr, the lead for the Lions for this project; Jane vanNood; Mary Lawr; Lynda Porter; Marilyn Frost; Ann McIvor; and Peter Stelter. This was the Lions first year for the service project under the Lions Club International project of service for the hungry, which included the donations from the public. Submitted by Linda Heeps.

"There were a number of people from the community there – probably more than 20. We had significant community involvement this year, I was absolutely delighted with the turnout," Wilson Carr stated.

The idea for the reverse advent calendar format came from a fellow Lions club member, who saw how successful it had been in another community. Being that one of the organization's main pillars of service is trying to reduce hunger in the Haliburton community, moving forward with the event seemed like a no-brainer, Wilson Carr said.

The food will be stored for the next month, and offered up to the community starting in January. Throughout December, the 4Cs Food Bank provides food vouchers to clients in need, avoiding the need for local residents to visit the facility over the busy festive period.

The food bank, officially recognized as the Christian Community Concern Centre Food Bank, has been helping local families for decades. It was launched in 1979 by the ministers of the Anglican, United, Baptist and Full Gospel Lighthouse churches. The operation ran without a recognized home for six years before the local council offered up the Drag River municipal building in 1985. Services would expand at that site to include the Lily Ann Thrift Shop, which sold second-hand clothing to help provide more income to purchase food. It moved to its current location in 2005.

Following the success of the first two years of the reverse advent calendar event, Wilson Carr promised the Lions club would "absolutely" take on the responsibility of organizing the event again in 2021.

County Life

The following inserts are being distributed with County Life this week:

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The executive and volunteers of Fuel for Warmth would like to say a sincere thank you to everyone who contributed to our charitable organization through the Shindig. The more than $41,500 will go a long way to assisting those in need of help to heat their homes this winter! Thank to our generous sponsors, our wonderful donors, the production team, technical team and amazing talent who made this ground-breaking broadcast possible. Thank you to the Haliburton Museum, The Dominion Hotel and Pub and 100.9 Canoe FM for the use of their premises (& high speed internet.) Thank you to the media for their contributions & interest in this annual extravaganza. It was a fabulous show, in every respect.

Thank you one and all!

Highlands Christmas Shindig

www.fuelforwarmth.com

Collections, sponsorship is about giving back

DARREN LUM

County Life Staff

The Re/Max Professionals North staff and sales representatives at the offices in Minden and Haliburton are sharing their good fortune from the year with collections, comprised of toys and non-perishables, and the sponsorship of three families for Christmas, as chosen by Point in Time.

Over four weeks, the two offices each held a collection, taking donations from staff and the community.

The Minden office held the Re/Max Minden Food Drive to collect more than $500 worth of non-perishables for the Minden Community Food Bank, while the Haliburton office held the Remax Haliburton Toy Drive where more than 100 toys, valued at more than $2,000 was collected for the 4Cs Food Bank and Lily Ann. Together, the two offices helped to sponsor three area families this Christmas, ensuring they would have a Christmas with food and toys.

Katie Rowe, manager and sales representative for Re/Max Professionals North said this effort just made sense.

"With everything that has gone on this year, with COVID-19 and the world battling through a pandemic and a lot of our businesses struggling, we were [one industry] that has been very strong this year. I know for our agents it was an amazing opportunity to be able to give back to our local communities and really just try to make a better Christmas for those families that are more affected than we are," she said.

Rowe said the offices expect to repeat this effort next year, but will start earlier so it can collect more donations and possibly sponsor more families.

The idea for these collections, Rowe said, was derived from a fact-finding survey sent out to learn what the greatest needs were in our community, which revealed the 4Cs Food Bank and Lily Ann, the Minden Community Food Bank and Point in Time.

They "were the three biggest responses that we received so that's who we decided to reach out to," she said.

Sales representative Lynda Litwin was happy to have been able to be part of this initiative.

"As part of Re/Max Professionals North, we are all very thrilled to be able to support both the Minden and the Haliburton communities. We pooled the food. We pooled the toys. We want to help the families as much as we can," she said.

Re/Max Professionals North sales representatives Jeff Strano, left, Katie Rowe, Marg Parish, Deb Lambe, Jade McCartney (administration), John Parish, Andrea Strano and Ted Vasey are proud of what they collected for the 4Cs Food bank and Lily Ann this year. The Haliburton office hopes to repeat the effort and start earlier so the collection can be greater.
/DARREN LUM Staff

Rowe hopes this encourages other businesses, who have thrived during the pandemic to realize the importance of giving back, whether it's through fundraising, sponsoring a family, or collecting toys and non-perishables.

"There are so many ways that businesses can contribute and it really just takes one leader from each office to be able to reach out and find out what the need is and rally some people to do it," she said.

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A warm welcome

Dysart Mayor Andrea Roberts gives the Echo's new editor Mike Baker a tour of the downtown, which included a walk down Highland Street on Nov. 26./DARREN LUM Staff

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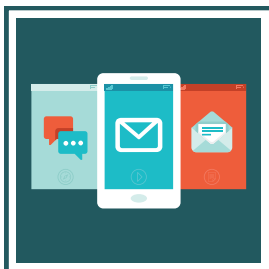

Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

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25th Annual **Christmas Challenge**

Join the Challenge and help us to make a difference

This year is going to be a challenge for everyone as we adapt to the Covid-19 protocols.

Even though you will likely not be having your annual staff party you can still be a part of The Haliburton County Home Builders' Christmas Challenge.

STEP 1:
Call in advance to the Home Builders Office 457-6901, Members of the Home Builders Association will pick up your gifts and deliver them to the workshops in Haliburton, Minden & Wilberforce. Porch pick up & delivery will be available for all.

Large or small, each gift will help fill the much-needed Christmas hampers distributed by the 4C's in Haliburton, Minden Community Food Bank and The Central Food Network.

STEP 2:
Collect unwrapped toys or food items at your home or office.

Haliburton County
Home Builders Association

REMEMBER to make the most of the Challenge have your gifts ready for pick up BEFORE December 10th. Early delivery to the *workshops* means the elves have enough time to prepare for gifts for Covid and Christmas.

This is the ***25th anniversary of the Christmas Challenge.*** Whether this is the first year you have taken the challenge or the 25th year all gifts are needed. If you aren't sure what to collect simply gather local gift certificates.

A value of $15.00 each makes it easy to top up gifts for families who have teenagers.

Call 705-457-6901 for more information and to book your gift pick up.

Support local business community and enter Buy In and Win contest

MIKE BAKER

County Life Editor

Shoppers visiting downtown Haliburton stores could secure themselves a Christmas windfall this festive season by participating in the BIA's annual Buy In and Win contest.

The annual event is shifting gears this year. Ordinarily, the winner, and one guest, would be sent off on an all-inclusive Caribbean vacation, but the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic meant contest organizers had to go back to the drawing board and think up a whole new prize this time around.

"This year, participants will have a chance to win $1,500 in gift certificates that can be used at any BIA business," said Angelica Ingram, BIA administrator. "It's kind of a neat transition, in my opinion. This is a more accessible prize for most people, and is something that more people can be excited about, because not everyone can travel, and not everyone likes to travel."

To be entered, all you have to do is visit any participating Haliburton BIA store. While the idea behind the event, Ingram says, is to help support the local business community, participants do not have to make a purchase to fill out and submit a ballot. All entrants must be 19 years of age or older.

The contest launched on Nov. 20 and will run until Dec. 23. According to Ingram, there is no limit on the number of ballots a single resident can submit.

"People can fill out as many ballots as they want. They can submit 100 times if they visit 100 different places, or go to the same place 100 times," Ingram said.

There are more than 120 different businesses within the Haliburton BIA borders, featuring both big-name box stores, and long-tenured family businesses. Ingram said that people are often shocked when they learn there are so many businesses operating in the downtown core.

"We really do have more businesses here than people think. When I tell people the number, they can't believe it. They don't realize there are that many businesses in Haliburton," Ingram said. "The BIA area goes all the way from the street lights by (Haliburton Highlands Secondary School), all the way up Highland St. past the LCBO, then across to the arena on the east side and (Win Yeung) Chinese restaurant to the west."

> ***If you're a big box store and you have a couple of bad months, you're probably going to weather it just fine and come out the other end. For a small mom and pop shop, that's not always the case. If they have a few employees, and a couple of months of very low sales, that can make or break you.***
>
> — Angelica Ingram, BIA administrator

She added, "There are a lot of hidden businesses that are run out of people's homes, or are maybe not right on the main street, but are still valuable members of the local business community."

In recent years, the BIA has worked alongside its member businesses to extend shopping hours and organize special one-night events in the lead up to Christmas. Due to the pandemic, many individuals felt it wouldn't be wise encouraging so many people to congregate in one area at a specific time, so all the proverbial eggs were pushed into the Buy In and Win basket.

Given the struggles many local businesses have endured this year, Ingram hopes area residents will rally behind their favourite stores and support them during their time of need.

"It's been a hard year for a lot of small businesses. Dealing with the shutdown in the spring, and a lot of quiet months since then. A lot of people are very cautious not to leave their homes, and are doing as minimal amount of shopping as they can right now. There have been a lot of abrupt changes to shopping practices everywhere, and Haliburton is no exception," Ingram said.

"If you're a big box store and you have a couple of bad months, you're probably going to weather it just fine and come out the other end. For a small mom and pop shop, that's not always the case. If they have a few employees, and a couple of months of very low sales, that can make or break you. For somewhere like Haliburton, that could be one whole family's livelihood gone, so I think it's important to keep that in mind when shopping locally," she continued.

"These businesses have supported the community, a lot of them over a number of years. Now it's our turn to help support them as much as possible," Ingram finished.

The draw to determine the winner of this year's Buy In and Win event will take place at noon on Dec. 23, live on the air on 93.5 Moose FM.

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Shop local this festive season

MIKE BAKER
Editor

HOW ON EARTH did it get to December already? In a lot of ways, it's been a long year thanks to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Still, there was a definite sense of 'huh, how?' when I turned over to the final page of my 2020 calendar last Tuesday.

Anyone else with me on this?

Maybe it's just my profession. As a journalist, especially while working at a weekly newspaper, I tend to live in a never ending sequence of seven-day bubbles. A new one begins the second I finish editing a paper and send it off to be published. There's always so much to do in any given week, that time truly feels like it's flying. Production day seems to come around at the blink of an eye.

With that said, it really shouldn't surprise me that we're already in December although, in my mind, it feels like Thanksgiving was yesterday. Heck, I can still vividly remember celebrating Canada Day. Well, as much as you can call ordering in Chinese food and watching a Netflix movie with my wife celebrating…

And now, as I think about celebrating, my attentions, naturally, turn to Christmas. The festive season is here. Most people are busy planning and preparing for the big day. Christmas lists are being checked off, festive feasts organized, and family gatherings arranged [most via Zoom]. As nice as it's going to be to sit back, relax and spend a little time with family, it's not lost on me just how different Christmas is going to be this year.

The Ontario government is already asking that families try to keep gatherings to a maximum of 10 people in most areas, while residents of COVID-19 hotspots like Toronto and Peel Region are being told not to see anyone outside of their household. That's going to impact a lot of people at this time of the year.

Perhaps the biggest change of all is going to be around Christmas shopping. This is the time of year when shopping malls are packed, and you're used to rubbing shoulders with people all day long. You look forward to those crazy moments when you spot two passionate moms fighting over the last toy left on the shelf. All of that is likely to be gone this year though, with many places implementing a limit on the number of people they will allow into their store, or even mall, at any one time.

So, if you find yourself in a line at your favourite box store, instead of waiting around in the cold, why don't you check out what's available right on your doorstep? Here in Haliburton County, there are many small businesses that have endured difficult years and could really do with some additional support as 2020 comes to a close.

Looking at hubs like Haliburton and Minden in particular, there are dozens of locally-owned stores to choose from while out doing your Christmas shopping. Many of these businesses have been in operation for generations, and truly are the lifeblood of our community. They've supported countless causes over the years, now it's our turn to step up and help them through these toughest of times.

If that wasn't convincing enough, the Haliburton BIA is currently running a Buy In and Win contest, where one lucky shopper will receive $1,500 in gift certificates to be used at local businesses. All you have to do to enter is visit a participating business and fill out a ballot. You don't even necessarily need to buy anything, although I encourage you to do so. I've only been here for a couple of weeks, and already I've noticed there are some real gems here, business-wise, in town.

So, residents of Haliburton County, despite all that is going to be different, let's enjoy this festive season and all the magic it brings. And let's show our local business community the support it deserves.

Top 10 really bad Christmas gift ideas

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

NOW THAT THERE are only a few shopping days left till Christmas, desperate shoppers just like me are scrambling for ideas. This never works out well for the recipient. The good news is that there is a world of wonderful, thoughtful gifts just waiting to be bought. The bad news is there are far more horrible, awkward ones. With that in mind, here are the top 10 bad Christmas gifts to avoid.

1. The parrot that was at Hillary Clinton's election headquarters.
2. A card that offers free foot massages – and a foot massage course, so they can do it right.
3. A 12-pack of "fine artisanal wine."
4. Any cologne you can smell while the bottle is still unopened.
5. The Trump Book of Wit and Wisdom.
6. Anything bedazzled.
7. Any portrait where the subject's eyes follow you.
8. A "Defund the Police" bumper sticker.
9. Rudy Giuliani's hair dye.
10. Any appliance that cooks something faster than the appliance bought last year.

Behind the scenes at the Shindig

The 7th annual Highlands Christmas Shindig included Victoria Bingham as Penelope, left, Mike Jaycock as Dame Beatrice and Peter Jaycock as Sir Cedric, who were part of a group of skilled performers for the variety entertainment show on Nov. 28. Due to COVID-19, this year's show was broadcasted virtually and helped to raise $41,500 for Fuel for Warmth, which helps to alleviate heating challenges during the winter. Photo submitted by Betty Mills.

BIA, Lions Club calling on community to help decorate downtown Christmas tree

MIKE BAKER
County Life Editor

Two local organizations are encouraging area residents to help keep the Christmas spirit alive in Haliburton this festive season.

The Haliburton and District Lions Club is teaming up with the Haliburton Village Business Improvement Area (BIA) to host an impromptu month-long Christmas tree decoration party on Highland St. From now until Dec. 25, local residents are invited to bring their favourite Christmas ornament and hang it on the town tree, located outside the Village Barn on Highland Street.

The event has been put forward as a way for people to tap into the Christmas magic a little differently this year, with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic forcing popular celebrations such as the Santa Claus parade and Festival of Trees to be cancelled.

"It's been a tough year, and I think people are looking for a sense of festivity and community with the Christmas season upon us," said Angelica Ingram, administrator of the Haliburton BIA. "Our town is small, and we do a lot of community-oriented things, and people are starting to notice the absence of that."

She added, "We're trying to do something here to make people feel connected. We're trying to encourage people to be a part of the community. I think people are tired of being isolated, and just tired of not seeing their neighbours, friends and family on the main street."

Although the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit was moved into the 'Yellow' zone of the Ontario government's coronavirus response framework on Friday, Dec. 4, Ingram believes local residents can feel safe participating in the event providing they follow the recognized safety protocols and practice social distancing.

The tree, donated by local businessman Kim Emmerson and set up by volunteer members of the Dysart Fire Department last week, already boasts about a half dozen Christmas decorations, although there's room for much more says Jim Frost, a long-time member of the local Lions Club.

Having spent several years organizing the town's Santa Claus parade, Jim was determined to find another way to celebrate the Christmas season in style. In the end, it was his wife Marilyn who came up with the idea to decorate the town tree.

"I saw something on TV one day, where another community was doing something similar and I thought 'what a great idea'," Marilyn said. "I've always felt that tree should have something else on it. This is now a great way to get people into town, and get kids involved."

Haliburton & District Lions Club members Marilyn and Jim Frost take a moment to help decorate the town Christmas tree, located on Highland St., on Monday, Nov. 30. /MIKE BAKER Staff

Haliburton Highlands Museum rolling out Museum Advent Calendar this festive season

The Haliburton Highlands Museum is celebrating the festive season in a special way this year. Each day, from Dec. 1 to Dec. 25, Kate Butler, the museum's director, will be showcasing different items and artefacts via a Museum Advent Calendar. This week, we shine a light on the first seven entries of the feature, with more to come in the lead up to Christmas. The local museum will be showcasing each artefact on Twitter @HH_Museum.

Let's kick off our Museum Advent Calendar with a little fanfare! Did you know that "White Christmas" is reputed to be the best-selling single, not just in terms of Christmas music, but of all time? First released in 1942, this Irving Berlin Classic has sold over 50 million copies! /KATE BUTLER, director of the Haliburton Highlands Museum

Time for Museum Advent Day 2! Poinsettias originally come from Mexico where they're known as "Flor de Nochebuena" (Christmas Eve Flower). Their English name is linked to Joel Poinsett, an American diplomat who brought them back to the States in 1828.

It's time for Day 3 of our Museum Advent Calendar! We may think of artificial Christmas trees as a modern invention, but their history goes back to mid-19th century Germany. Those early artificial trees were actually made of green-painted goose feathers!

This Christmas & Holiday Season
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Museum Advent Day 4 "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" is a classic, but it was adapted from Charles Wesley's 1739 "Hymn for Christmas Day". That hymn's first line reads, "Hark, how all the welkin rings". Welkin..? It comes from the Middle English for clouds or heavens.

Museum Advent Day 5 The combination of red and white just makes you think peppermint this time of year, doesn't it? According to legend however, candy canes were originally pure white and were first made in the 17th century as a way to keep small children attentive during long church services.

Above, Museum Advent Day 6 On December 6 th , 1917, the Halifax Explosion devastated the Maritime city. Boston was quick to send aid and today, Nova Scotia sends a Christmas tree every year to Boston Common, as a way of recognizing that vital help and support that was offered over 100 years ago.

Left, Museum Advent Day 7 The Nutcracker is a holiday tradition, but E.T.A. Hoffman's 1816 story on which the ballet is based has many elements which weren't included when it was brought to the stage. These included a flashback sequence which explained how the Prince was first transformed into a Nutcracker.

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A collection of farewell thoughts for longtime editor, Jenn Watt

I have always been slightly intimidated by Jenn. I immediately recognized her fierce intelligence when she arrived for an interview for the reporter's job. She was 20 years my junior and I would ostensibly be her "boss" but her strengths matched my insecurities.

I knew I'd be a fool not to offer her the job. But first I needed to make sure she really wanted it.

"Before you head back to Toronto," I told her at the end of the interview, "I want you to drive around Haliburton. What you see is what you'll get. It's not going to change. There won't be any more young people for you to become friends with. There won't be any more social or cultural opportunities. Do you really want to live here?"

Thank goodness she said yes. Because what I learned about Jenn is that her courage is complemented by an intense empathy. She cares deeply about people, which is why she worked so hard to provide them with a voice. In everything she did, she made the newspapers, and the county, better. She was a wise and wonderful steward of the papers' proud history. Thank you!

Martha Perkins
Former editor of the Echo and Times

Sitting at the helm of a newspaper with over 135 years of history is quite a responsibility, but it's something that Jenn has done with grace, good humour and a keen sense of community for over a decade. Thank you, Jenn, for all the amazing opportunities you've given us to share stories from our community's history within the pages of the paper and for collecting community stories for future historians! Good luck in all your new adventures, and keep writing!

Kate Butler

I have had the pleasure and privilege of dealing with Jenn for all the years that she has been at the *Echo* and *Times*.

When news happened, she was the first person you wanted to contact. You knew that:

She cared deeply about our community
She wanted to build it up, not pull it down
She would get the facts and double check them
She was passionate about protecting:

- Our environment
- Our arts and culture
- All the people in the community, especially the vulnerable
- Our sense of community

In all those years I have never heard her raise her voice, speak in anger or get frustrated even though she constantly dealt with deadlines and pressure.

Jenn, thank you so much for all you have done for our community. I wish you all the best in your future endeavours and hope that our paths cross frequently.

Paul MacInnes

For as long as I've made Haliburton County home and been active on local economic and environmental justice issues, one journalist, in particular, has always been conspicuous by her presence.

Jenn Watt has consistently made it her business to amplify minority voices and help communicate information, ideas, and campaigns designed to make life in our neck of the wood better for this generation and those who will follow.

At a time when truth and accuracy have become endangered species and people get more and more of their information from social media rumour than fact-checked newspapers, our amazing crew of local community newspapers have served us very well. A big shout out to Jenn for being such a

key part of making that happen.

Of course, there are others who will follow in Jenn's footsteps but they have some very big shoes to fill.

Jenn, you are respected by all those whose paths you have crossed and everyone wishes you all the best for what comes next. Check in from time to time so that your fans know what you are up to and how you're doing.

Terry Moore

My time working with Jenn began almost exactly 11 years ago. It was November, it was grey and it was cold. However my welcome to the *Haliburton County Echo* could not have been any warmer.

Jenn went out of her way to embrace me and show me the ropes of journalism. Not just in a local sense, but in the way a brilliant and passionate editor takes a young novice under their wing. Jenn was just that, brilliant and passionate.

Over the next nine years Jenn taught me something new every day and more importantly, she became my friend.

Under her leadership the *Echo/Times* won numerous provincial and national awards, maintained its impeccable reputation in the community and perhaps most importantly, she never let me miss a deadline. However what I will remember most about Jenn is our friendship, a friendship that lasts to this day. Jenn and I worked side by side and had hundreds if not thousands of laughs together, shared stories, discussed the direction of the newspaper and much more.

Jenn, I wish you all the best in your future endeavours and wherever the road in life may take you. The community was so lucky to have you at the helm of these newspapers and we will never forget you.

Angelica Ingram

I first met Jenn Watt when she phoned me in 2007 to ask me to deliver a keynote speech at the 20th anniversary of the Dec. 6 vigil and awareness raising of violence against women event. From that first conversation with Jenn to our ongoing relationship that has continued to this day, through the years Jenn and I have found ourselves holed up in the Kozy Korner restaurant, or our respective offices discussing matters of great community importance. Often our conversations were dictated by the work I was/am doing at the time, whether it has been poverty alleviation/awareness, food insecurity, women's rights, community programs, youth mental wellness, or most recently how to navigate a global pandemic and keep love and kindness at the forefront. Jenn would always find and in fact encourage my deep passions regarding these and many more topics, which not only helped me further my own personal and professional goals, but offered a place where I could be heard both on and off the record with deep resolve and a shared desire to help educate, inform and maybe even make a difference.

Jenn began her role as editor at roughly the same time I began working in community/social services within Haliburton County, and it feels like the two of us grew professionally together, often spending a little longer in our meetings to chat about living and working in rural Ontario and the highs, lows and in-betweens of navigating communications and conversations with deep care and mindfulness.

Thank you Jenn for always being open to difficult discussions around the deeper needs of our rural community and for never shying away from the issues at hand, being brave and professional enough to communicate them with great care and for being a support to not only my work, but our community.

Nancy Brownsberger

I first met Jenn Watt in the summer of 2008 in Minden at the first "Logs, Rocks and Steel" triathlon. She was very new to the area and to her reporting gig with the *Echo*. Jenn was friendly and inquisitive in our brief chat and I remember asking her if she had had a chance to enjoy some of the benefits of living in the Highlands. She laughed and said that at that point, her job was taking up most of her time.

Jenn has a wonderful sense of humour and had lots of opportunity to use it in 2015 as part of a five person "Haliburton Reads" panel co-sponsored by the Haliburton County Public Library and Canoe FM. We had a lot of fun over five or six weekly tapings, arguing and laughing, and I got to see another side of Ms. Watt.

In late 2015, a large group of people came together and agreed that an application should be made to sponsor a Syrian refugee family. Jenn was one of eight individuals that agreed to help manage this daunting project on behalf of the community. Her generosity, compassion and talent during those months were formidable and in September of 2016, the Wiso family arrived and continue to call Haliburton, home.

Thanks for everything, Jenn, it's been a treat.

Sean Pennylegion

It was a beautiful June day when I drove from Toronto to Haliburton to become the 2016 summer reporter. Immediately, I felt right at home. This wasn't because I'm a country girl at heart, or love freshwater lakes and rolling hills, it was because of Jenn Watt.

From the moment I walked into Jenn's office – nervous and unsure of what exactly it meant to be a reporter – Jenn exuded a heady mix of warmth, competence, and professionalism. She overlooked my lack of training in essential small-town newsroom skills, and instead focused on my positive qualities. In short, Jenn brought out the best in me, and this wasn't just confined to the written word. She taught me, through her example, how to be fair yet kind, how every story matters, how the balancing act between being a reporter and a citizen requires large doses of tact, humour, and grace. Thank you, Jenn. That summer in Haliburton County changed my life's course, and I'm certain I'm not the only one who feels this way.

Angela Long

We have been blessed to have had Jenn as editor of our local newspapers for the last decade. She has been competent, caring, curious, and connected to our community. Under her watch, I've been confident that the news we read has been reported accurately and fairly. I've appreciated the deep interest that she has demonstrated in the history of our communities and the light she has shone on my personal endeavours in local family history research. I wish Jenn all the best in her next chapter and will miss her very much.

Adele Espina

We were so happy to share in Jenn's enjoyment of Barnum Creek Nature Reserve where she went for some Vitamin N (Vitamin Nature) and found plenty of it there. Thanks Jenn for your wonderful editorial! Much luck in your new journey.

Leopoldina and Margaret Dobrzensky

How do you say thank you to one whose work means so much to all of us, the *Echo* readers?

Week by week we receive perspective on significant issues, local or further afield. Her command of the English language is noted and appreciated.

Jenn has been patient about my somewhat indecipherable scrawl since I write longhand, and maintained her good humour throughout.

I was so touched by her coming to photograph and write up my 80th birthday.

Jenn earned my gratitude for her script of Earl's accomplishments following his death. When I felt useless, thinking my necessity ended, Jenn was kind enough to come and see me. I thought my resignation would be accepted, but instead I was given encouragement to go on even on a monthly basis for the column.

I am so proud to be part of the *Echo*, pleased by its established quality so ably carried on by Jenn Watt. I'll miss you Jenn.

Eleanor Cooper

I was surprised at Jenn's announcement that she was leaving her post at the paper to pursue other interests. She has been such an integral part of the local media scene and doing the job so well that the prospects of change seemed remote.

She helped build this community with her very competent and caring editorial and writing skills. She was always open to new stories, ideas, and mobilized resources to tell those stories. I appreciate how she supported and showcased the work of local organizations such as the Haliburton County Folk Society and businesses such as mine.

Above all else she is a very nice person, a true Canadian and an expression of Destination Canada's (our country's top marketing organization) recent campaign – "Canadians didn't invent nice; they just perfected it." Jenn is perfection.

Looking forward to meeting Jenn on the street, at a concert or more likely in the library.

Barrie Martin

Thank you, Jenn, for helping to keep local journalism thriving in a time when many small communities are losing their local papers. You have helped to keep Haliburton County informed about our community – whether reveling in our successes, or showing us what we need to do better.

Erin Kernohan-Berning

Because we are not newspaper editors, most of us never realize the special skills and the time requirements needed to do such an important job. Dear Jenn, in your profession you have certainly surpassed those requirements, and we are all profoundly grateful.

But there comes a time in each of our lives when things change, and we know that we too must move on. For these several years, as editor of our local newspaper, you have helped to make our local newspaper, you have helped to make our lives richer and more informed. We have all appreciated your natural talent and unique sense of how to present our weekly news, as you have worked with the *Echo's* wonderful staff. Under your editorial leadership, the whole community has been brought right into our homes - what an incredible legacy! Haliburton has always been my cherished home, and each week I have looked forward to connecting my community through the *County Echo*, and I'm sure it will continue to be an important part of those connections.

Of course, it will not be the same. We will all miss you Jenn. And as a neighbour to the *Echo* office, I will miss you, and can only wish you all the best as you leave to pursue your library interests - in which you will also excel.

We say goodbye regretfully, but with every good wish and kind remembrance.

Bill Gliddon

I remember that when Martha Perkins packed her bags, we all held our collective breath about how this young sprite that she had consigned her beloved paper to, this Jenn Watt, barely dry behind the ears, how would she manage?

Time has validated Martha's decision. Jenn has done herself proud. She has done us proud. The existence, let alone quality, of our local newspapers make us the envy of many small rural communities. They nurture our culture and our economy. We better understand who we are when we see ourselves reflected, the big and the little, the old and the new, each week.

I'm sure I speak for others when I wish Jenn every success in her new venture. I am grateful that it will not take her away from us. I look forward to seeing how she seeps into the community when she is free to abandon her journalist's pen.

Fay Martin

I have had the pleasure to once again work alongside Jenn since my return to the papers in early 2014. I was very impressed with Jenn and her professionalism soon after she arrived in Haliburton in 2008, so it came as no surprise to me that when Martha Perkins left the papers in 2009, that Jenn was Martha's pick as her successor. And what a great decision that was!

Jenn is smart, kind, well organized, dedicated, thoughtful, a patient listener, (obviously a great writer) and I'm happy to say never late with a deadline! That's right, never late with a deadline, no matter how much pressure she was under (and that pressure is constant and never ending).

I could write so much about Jenn and her daily dealings with staff, subscribers, customers, politicians, printers – and me – but I don't have enough space or time. However, I will share what will likely be one of my most enduring and proud moments as a co-worker with Jenn.

It was last Christmas at our annual freelancer potluck. Staff prepare their favourite dish or dessert to share a tasty meal and fellowship with our freelance writers and contributors. You can tell that this is a special event for Jenn – she talks freely with everyone, and moves about the room like a dancer clearly enjoying every moment. When the formal part of the affair started Jenn took over and effortlessly introduced everyone in the room, talking about their column, or their role at the papers. There were about 20 people in the room and with no notes (yes, no notes) and no "ums" or pauses, Jenn had the room in her hands. It was like great theatre – watching everyone glow as they were in the spotlight.

I was very proud of Jenn that day and will always be proud of her.

David Zilstra

My sources, which are always top notch and very reliable, tell me that you're a bit of a fan of "The Agenda," the program I've hosted on TVO for the past 15 seasons. I'm delighted to hear that. I've heard about your most fascinating career change. Coincidentally, as I write this, our program last night was all about how the public library has become an integral part of the community even more, given the challenges of the current pandemic. So you're moving into another area that has huge importance for our communities.

In any event, I wanted to add my name to the chorus of others who are congratulating you for the footprints you've left in journalism over the years. Whether one works at the *New York Times* or the *Haliburton County Echo*, the principles of accuracy, fairness, and commitment to printing the best available version of the truth we can find are constant. I take my hat off to you for making that important contribution to your readers and their communities. Best of luck in your next great adventure!

Steve Paikin
TVO

Good luck Jenn, we will miss you!

From readers on Facebook

Comments have been edited for clarity and length.

The end of an era. You will be sadly missed. All the best on your future adventure. You will be great!

John Teljeur

Always appreciated the well-written articles and your support for so many ventures in the community. I wish you well!

Jane Taylor Eastwood

Exciting news for Jenn! She has been a wonderful supporter of our Haliburton Hospital Auxiliary and wish her much happiness!

Tracey Lear

You have made such an impact to the papers and the place itself. Wishing you all the best in the next phase and as a reader, and community member, passing along my thanks.

Katy Francis

Thanks for all the support you gave to the Haliburton Red Wolves. You helped put us on the map! The pics and write-ups were great.

Rick West

I met Jenn Watt soon after I arrived. I was impressed: this bright professional knew her town, knew her stuff and certainly, knew journalism. Jenn Watt will be missed. She's left the *Echo* in good hands. I wish Jenn only good things in all of her tomorrows.

Joan Ransberry

Heartfelt thanks to Jenn for always having a well-balanced view and for her many years of service!

Amanda Virtanen

I am blessed in making a positive connection with you. Thank you for being open and free from judgment.

Barb Rosen

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Gail Scott loves to knit on her couch at her Haliburton home. She has knitted more than 1,000 pairs of mittens for local kids, using wool from her own supply and that has been donated towards her efforts. /DARREN LUM Staff FILE

Wooly winter warmth: Knitting mitts for kids

SUE TIFFIN

County Life Staff

Gail Scott laughs when she is asked why she is getting media attention lately.

"I knit mitts for kids," she says.

Not just a handful of mittens, but more than 1,000 pairs to date over the past several years, since the Haliburton resident first heard of a Warm Hands for Christmas campaign on Canoe FM Radio that was asking for donations of mittens to be distributed to local organizations including the Haliburton 4Cs, elementary schools, SIRCH Community Services and the Pregnancy Care and Family Support Centre.

"Canoe had it on the radio about seven years ago, they needed children's mitts, for the young ones," says Scott. "So I went down to the basement, and got the wool that I could use, and I knit 67 pair."

Scott brought the fruits of her labour to the radio station, and explained it was a fun activity, but she might not be able to provide more than she had done due to the cost of wool.

"I said to Roxanne [Casey, station manager], now, don't expect me to do anymore, because I don't have any more wool and I cannot afford to be buying it," recalls Scott. "I'm a widow, I live on my own, and, you know, buying wool is not what it used to be, 50 years ago."

Three days later, Scott says, Casey called her with a surprise.

"So I went in to her office and she said, guess what I've got for you ... She had two bags of wool. They were donated by one person and I've been knitting, well, I hit 1,000 pair of children's knits over the last seven or eight years. So that's what I do."

A knack for knitting began decades ago, when Scott began knitting clothing for her children.

"I was expecting my first child, and my mother-in-law said to me, 'Gail, you'd better start your knitting'," says Scott. "I said, 'I don't know how'. She said, 'well, you're going to learn'."

Leggings, zippered jackets, a hat with ties for under the chin and little mitts as well as sweaters and pullovers with patterns on them helped keep Scott's three children warm in handmade creations.

She says she has now been knitting over 55 years or so, on and off.

"There was a 10-year period where I don't think I knit anything, but as soon as I heard Roxanne on the radio, I just picked up my needles and it all came back to me," she says.

Now, she doesn't know how long it takes her to knit a single pair – she's a busy woman, venturing out here and there, chatting on the phone, and taking a break every once in awhile. But she always returns to the project at hand.

"I find it very relaxing, and I'm not under pressure," she says. "I can pick up my knitting at any time. I knit my left and my right knits, right at the same time on the same needles because that way the length of the knit is the same. When you're knitting socks, it has to be the same. You've got to knit them together. You can't knit one sock and finish it off and then start the other one, because a quarter or half an inch, you don't think it's much but it is."

Scott has already donated this year's batch of mittens – more than 250 pairs –to Canoe FM, for distribution to children throughout the county, but her work continues.

"I think I've got 20 pair ready for next year," she says.

This holiday season needs to be different.

The safest way to celebrate indoors is only with the people who live in your home. People who live alone can get together only with one other home.

Gatherings with friends and extended family can carry an increased risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. Consider celebrating outdoors or virtually with others that are not part of your household.

Know the gathering limits in your area before you choose to entertain with family and friends indoors. Indoor gatherings are not permitted in regions in Grey-Lockdown.

For all gatherings with anyone you do not live with:

- **maintain 2 metres physical distance**
- **wear a face covering**
- **avoid potlucks or shared utensils**
- **ensure everyone washes hands regularly, including before and after meals**

Self-isolate if you are sick, even if your symptoms are mild and ask guests to stay home if they feel unwell.

Follow provincial and local public health advice to keep you and your loved ones safe this holiday.

Stopping the spread, starts with you.

Visit ontario.ca/celebratesafely to learn more.

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In partnership with HHHS Community Programs, over 1,000 pounds of fresh produce was distributed in Haliburton County from Edwin Binney's Community Garden.

Funding support was provided to 12 local organizations through the federal government's Covid-19 Seniors Response and Emergency Community Support Funds. Over $175,000 in pandemic support funding has been invested in Haliburton County through United Way CKL administered programs.

Haliburton County LCBO stores have raised over $127,000 for children and youth programs through the United Way At the Till fundraiser.

Over $10,000 in funding for fourinfo.com. This database is now part of the 211 system. Dial 211 or visit www.211.ca to find the community services you need.

In 2017, a Day of Caring for Community Living Trent Highlands was held to expand its community garden plots. Local businesses and volunteers helped make this dream a reality.

You can help make a difference in your community. Donate today by visiting http://ckl-unitedway.ca/donate-now/ or mail in the form below.

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580 NOTICES

580 NOTICES

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Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC) is seeking individuals to become members of the Board of Directors who: (a) are residents of one of the four (4) counties of Peterborough, Northumberland, Haliburton and Kawartha Lakes; and (b) can bring volunteer Board experience, business/professional skills and reflect our changing community diversity to our governance processes. The Board is seeking strong contributors with an interest in future leadership positions.

The Board
- Governs the affairs of PRHC in line with best practices in the sector
- Advances PRHC's vision, mission and values
- Supports the implementation of the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan and ensures that all decisions are made in accordance with the plan
- Reviews and approves PRHC's Annual Operating Plan
- Provides oversight to quality of care
- Fosters regional relationships needed for seamless care

All applications are welcome, in particular from persons with a background in accounting, information technology, government and stakeholder relations, governance or healthcare, and innovation.

Before applying please visit our website at **www.prhc.on.ca** and click on **About PRHC/Board of Directors** for more detail.

How to Apply:
Submit an application along with a resume by January 15, 2021 to the Chair, Nominating Sub-Committee, c/o Margaret Clark, Senior Executive Assistant, Administration, Peterborough Regional Health Centre, One Hospital Drive, Peterborough, ON, K9J 7C6, or **email mclark@prhc.on.ca**

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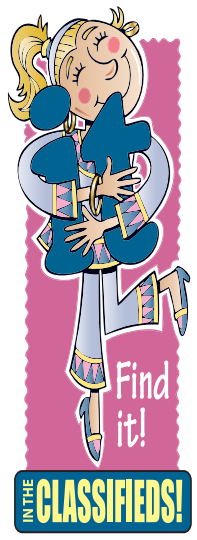
PRHC Peterborough Regional Health Centre



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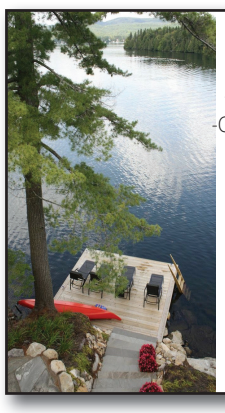

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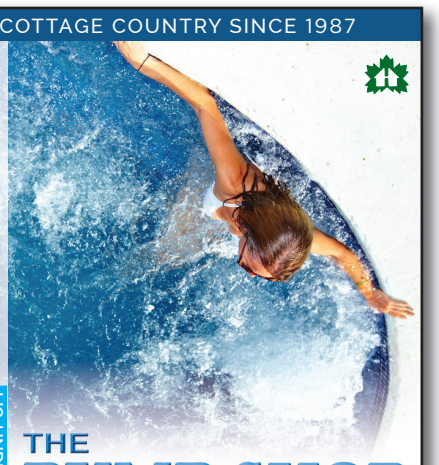

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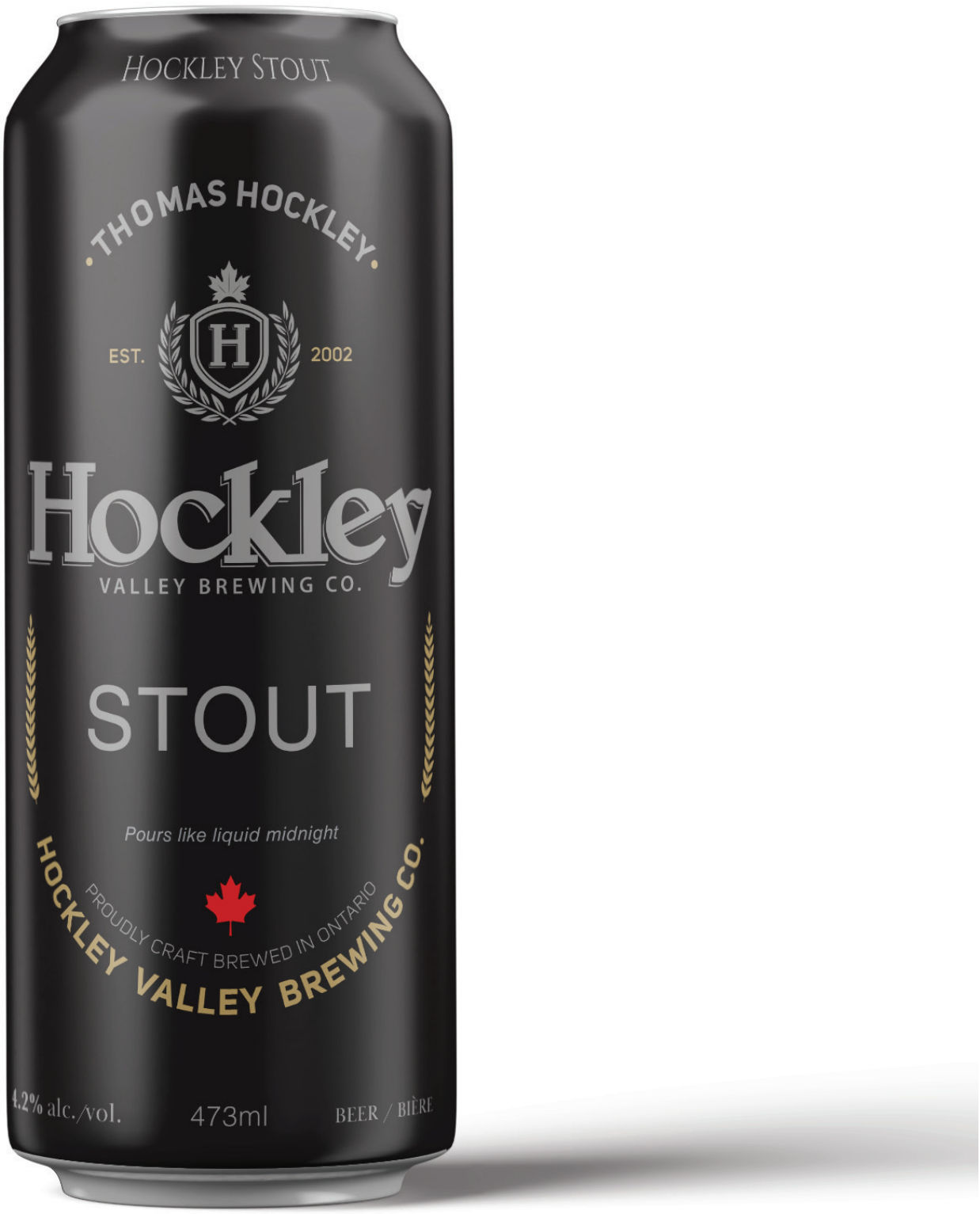

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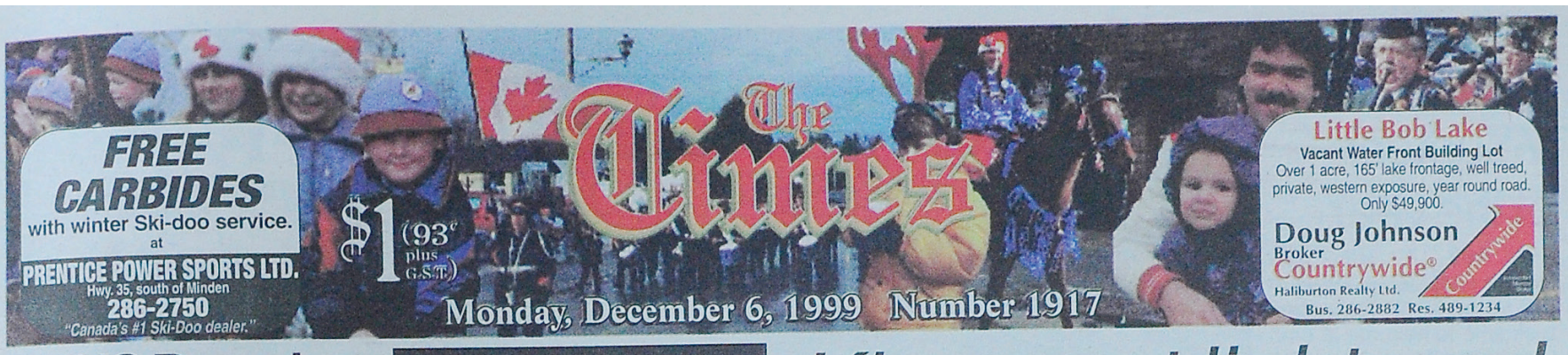

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HHHS Board endorses CHC application

The Strategic Planning Committee of the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Board received approval from the board to apply to the Ministry of Health for funding of a community health centre. If the Ministry looks favourably on the application, the facility would be housed in the upper floor of the west wing of Hyland Crest scheduled to undergo renovations as soon as the residents are moved to the new wing of the building.

The Ontario Ministry of Health is providing funding for community health centres where the communities can demonstrate the need for such a facility.

The committee will be applying on the basis of the special needs of the area's senior population, which is double the provincial average, as well as a large percentage of low income fami-

(more on page 5)

Kinmount lights up!

With the voices of young children filling the air with songs of the season, the Kinmount community Christmas tree was lit Thursday evening. The tree, adjacent to the train station, is one of many colourful displays throughout the community. The Kinmount Santa Claus parade is scheduled for this Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

Rotary Club of Minden annual award

Bryan Kernohan named Citizen of the Year

This was one lie Bryan Kernohan didn't mind being told. Under the premise of delivering a speech to the Minden Rotary Club on the Minden Wild Water Preserve and its possible use in the Toronto Olympic bid, Kernohan was actually there to receive the Minden Rotary Citizen of the Year award.

"They sucked me in. I should have known better," laughed Kernohan, although he was quite please with the award. "It was pretty surprising and I am grateful."

Kernohan was chosen for his many volunteer efforts including work with the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, Scouts and Venturers, The former Haliburton County School Board and the Provincial committee for Partners in Tourism.

Although he was chosen, Kernohan noted that on each of the committees and organizations he has served with, there are always many more volunteers working hard to ensure their success. "Volunteerism is pretty great around here. There are always five or six other people working just as hard or harder out there," he said.

Kernohan served as a trustee, for a term and a half, with the Haliburton County Board of Education, before its amalgamation with Victoria and Muskoka. As well, he has been working as a Scout and Venture leader for eight years.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR: The Minden Rotary Club Secretary/Treasurer Gord Graham left, and Acting President Bill Rozelle presented Bryan Kernohan, right, with the 1999 Citizen of the Year award. Kernohan was honoured in recognition of his work with the Chamber of Commerce, the Scouts, and many other community activities.

Two years ago, Kernohan joined the Haliburton Highland Chamber of Commerce board of directors and held the office of president, until this year, where he is now past president. He represents the family business, J.A.C. Kernohan. He had enjoyed his work with the chamber, despite the challenges of the last couple of years. He feels that with the addition of more volunteers manning the front office, the Chamber has a much more positive presentation to the public. As well, with the coming addition of the Trail and Tours Network to the Chamber of Commerce office, he thinks the chamber will be an even greater source of expertise and information. "They can trade to us, their presence. It just makes sense," he said.

As well, Kernohan is now part of the Central Ontario group of the Provincial committee for Partners in Tourism. This committee looks at marketing and promotional concepts by various stakeholders partnering together to attract and increase tourism. Kernohan feels that his work with this committee will be beneficial to similar projects in Haliburton County.

Bryan Kernohan was presented his award by Minden Rotary Secretary/Treasurer Gord Graham and Acting President Bill Rozelle.

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